4. Public Services

Defines public service and functions, access requirements, reference and research services for users, referrals, circulation of materials, marketing of FDLP services, and the Federal Depository Library of the Year award

What's New and Important

❖ Principle of Free Public Access

➢ Depository libraries shall make government publications available for the free use of the general public.

❖ Principle of Comparable Treatment

➢ Access and services for depository information resources should equal or exceed those applicable to other library collections and services. Reference service offered to members of the general public using the depository must be comparable to the reference service provided to the library's primary users.

❖ Referrals

➢ Libraries should refer their users to other libraries for access to unique collections and expertise, and also offer their own unique expertise, collections and resources to users referred by other depositories or organizations. Use tools provided to assist in locating the information a user seeks before referring them to another depository.

❖ Electronic Access & Filters

➢ All libraries should have a written policy regarding public services for government information in electronic formats that includes provisions for no-fee access to

electronic government information in tangible format and on the Internet for all users.

➢ Filtering software might inhibit access to official FDLP information, for example in the health or biological sciences fields. Therefore depository libraries must allow users the option to use workstations without filtering software or have the capability of turning off the filter while searching FDLP information resources. Depository libraries must ensure that their security or access policies, or those of their parent bodies, do not hinder public access to depository materials. At a minimum, libraries unable to deactivate filtering in a rapid manner must provide mediated searching for researchers.

➢ Public access computer workstations may require patron authentication for security reasons; however, signage (on computers, posted at tables, on desks) must indicate that patrons may inquire at the public service desk for assistance. Libraries may provide guests the ability to login at a workstation or staff may login them in at authenticated stations. At a minimum, if all workstations providing internet access require authentication, patrons should be directed to public service desks for assistance through mediated searching.

Define Public Service

Public services are those activities and operations of a Federal depository library that bring its staff into regular direct contact with users of government information resources. The two major public service goals are to provide the public with access to government information resources and to provide assistance so the public will benefit from that access.

Sources:
Reitz, J. M. (1996-). *Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science.* Westport, CT : Libraries Unlimited. Retrieved August 10, 2005, from http://bibpurl.oclc.org/web/4113
Evans, G. E., Amodeo, A. J. & Carter, T. L. (1999). *Introduction to library public services.* Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.]

Public Service Functions
Access
Reference & Research Services to Users
Referrals
Circulation of Materials & Interlibrary Loan
Marketing to Users
Federal Depository Library of the Year Award

Access

The goal of the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) is to provide the public with free access to Federal government information of public interest or educational value, regardless of format or medium, and to insure the continued availability in the future. The only government information excluded from this mission are those products produced strictly for administrative or operational purposes, classified for reasons of national security, or constrained by privacy considerations. As participants in this program, Federal depository libraries are legally required to provide free public access to depository information resources under the provisions of 44 USC 1911. For more information on Title 44 see the Legal Requirements in Chapter 2 [insert hyperlink].

Free Public Access
Free public access, as defined by the Government Printing Office (GPO), means that any member of the general public can use government information resources in all formats, without impediments. Depository libraries have a fundamental obligation to provide free public access to depository information resources and to minimize other barriers to public access to the library's depository facilities, collections, and services. The development of library-wide access policies, hours, standards of service, facilities, signage, staffing, collection development and management policies, and informational or promotional materials should be done in keeping with the goals of the depository program, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements (http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm), and accessibility guidelines (http://www.section508.gov/).

Factors that may affect access include:
❖ Housing [insert hyperlink] of collections and services within the library
❖ Bibliographic[insert hyperlink], technological, social, political, or economic barriers to collections and services
❖ User Categorization (that is, different treatment for different types of users, denying access based on a student identification, etc.) which is referenced below in the section, Public Access Policies)
❖ Staffing [insert hyperlink]
❖ Collection development [insert hyperlink]
❖ Preservation [insert hyperlink]
❖ Security efforts including patron authentication at public access computer workstations (see the section below, Public Access Policies)

Such factors, and any public access policies of a depository library's parent body, must not hinder free public access to depository information resources.

All appropriate library employees must be aware of the free public access requirements of Federal depository libraries, as well as of local, state, and Federal laws affecting user privacy. Any signage or communication, whether verbal, electronic, or tangible, that limits access to a depository library must be amended to exempt members of the general public wishing to use the library's depository information resources. Public access computer workstations may require patron authentication for security reasons; however, signage (on computers, posted at

tables, on desks) must indicate that patrons may inquire at the public service desk for assistance. Libraries may provide guests the ability to login at a workstation or staff may login them in at authenticated stations. At a minimum, if all workstations providing internet access require authentication, patrons should be directed to public service desks for assistance through mediated searching. Requests for recommendations on appropriate signage may be directed to askGPO (http://gpo.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/gpo.cfg/php/enduser/ask.php). Additionally, the Knowledge Base, a part of askGPO, (http://www.gpoaccess.gov/help/index.html) is a great first stop when seeking an answer to your question about the FDLP.

Comparable Treatment Principle

Beyond honoring the requirement of providing free public access to depository information resources, local policies and practices that apply to other collections and services of the library may be applied to depository information resources and services. In general, access and services for depository information resources should equal or exceed those applicable to other library collections and services. For example, depository libraries that offer night and weekend service hours to their primary clientele must provide comparable service hours to users of depository materials. The principle of comparable service would not require a separate documents unit to be staffed the same hours as a general reference unit if there were open access to the collection and basic assistance to the depository collection provided during those extended hours. Therefore, libraries are not required to develop separate policies for depository operations as long as the depository requirements are addressed by the library's other policies.

Public Access Policies

Local depository library policies for public access may include the following considerations:

❖ Depository libraries are not required to serve users who do not have a depository-related need to be in the library. Under a strict interpretation of the statute, a user from outside the library's principal user group may be limited to using only depository information resources.

❖ The public may not exploit the use of depository information resources as a pretext to circumvent library policies on use of materials purchased or licensed for use by the library's primary clientele.

❖ Access to depository resources cannot be denied to users because of their age. Libraries that implement age restrictions should develop user behavior policies to address under age conduct problems rather than restrict access.

❖ Depository users must adhere to the same standards of behavior expected of other library users.

❖ Depository libraries have the right to bar or remove any individual who poses a threat to library staff, other users, or the security of their collections.

❖ Access and services for depository information resources should equal or exceed those applicable to other library collections and services. Reference service offered to members of the general public using the depository must be comparable to the reference service provided to the library's primary users.

- ❖ Signage and other physical facilities of the library and parent institution cannot inhibit public access. Signage should be employed to facilitate access to depository materials.
- ❖ Since the use of filtering software may restrict access to official FDLP information, depository libraries must allow users the option to use workstations without filtering software or to turn off the filter while searching FDLP information.
- ❖ The number of available workstations is dependent upon the size of the depository operation and must be sufficient to serve the depository's users efficiently and effectively. Time limits and the use of sign-up sheets are acceptable.

Security concerns of depository libraries may lead local depository library administrators to implement heightened security for their facilities and personnel. Permissible actions include:
- ❖ Asking users for identification.
- ❖ Asking users to sign a guest register.
- ❖ Asking questions that screen users to verify that the library houses documents relevant to their information needs, and even escorting users to the depository collection.

Such actions in no way violate the responsibility of depository libraries to provide free access to the depository collection to the general public under 44 USC 1911.

Access at All Times
Public access to depository information resources and services must be maintained during renovation projects, collection relocation projects, or other temporary disruptions in library operations. Any depository library contemplating asbestos removal, renovation, or other temporary situations that would involve curtailing public service to the Federal depository collection should develop a strategy for ensuring that both its primary clientele and the general public continue to have access to Government information in all formats through the Federal Depository Library Program. The plan should include estimated dates of the project, extent of service curtailment, alternative strategies to be employed to fulfill government information requests, and techniques for notifying primary clienteles, other depository and non-depository libraries, and the general public. The plan does not have to be formal, lengthy, or elaborate.

 A depository library anticipating such a project should prepare a contingency plan for its depository operations and submit a copy of the plan to GPO ID Planning and Development, Library Services (via email to Planning and Development, Library Services lpplanning@gpo.gov or fax 202-512-2300) and to the library's regional library (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/regionals2005.pdf).

For cases where the library cannot receive and process materials, such as a renovation or disaster recovery, the shipment of depository materials can be suspended. Notify the Planning and Development, Library Services (lpplanning@gpo.gov) regarding the situation so arrangements can be made. For information on how to handle an unanticipated disaster affecting the library's

depository operations or collections, see <mark>Chapter 14 on Disaster Recovery [Insert hyperlink]</mark>.

Physical Access within the Library
The library should provide well-planned facilities for housing and using depository information resources within the library. Both collection and public service spaces should comply with standards for accessibility (United States Access Board http://www.access-board.gov/and American With Disabilities Act http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm) and be of the same quality as other collection and public service areas of the library, providing acceptable levels of lighting, temperature, ventilation, and noise control. Depository collections in all tangible formats should be allocated adequate, readily accessible space, located where materials may be retrieved in a reasonable period of time. Ideally, users should be able to browse the collection.

If depository information resources are in a separate area within the library, they should be conveniently located for user access to encourage their use. Depository public services spaces should be functional, flexible, and expandable. Public areas should be comfortable and provide seating at tables or carrels in sufficient numbers for in-library use of depository materials. Appropriate equipment for the use of depository information resources should be provided and maintained in sufficient numbers to meet demand, including photocopiers, equipment for reading and reproducing microforms, and appropriate hardware and software for using and downloading electronic depository information resources such as CD-ROMs, DVDs, or online. Attempts should be made to obtain hardware that meets the latest Workstation Specifications (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/computers/).

If a tangible electronic information resource acquired though the FDLP is not loaded and/or supported on a depository library computer workstation, the library should attempt to provide access to it within a designated timeframe (determined by the library). As an alternative, the library should provide for circulation in accordance with the library's circulation policies for other nongovernmental tangible electronic information resources or other depository resources.

Online Access
Depository staff must ensure access to depository materials regardless of format. All depository libraries should have a written policy regarding public services for Government information in electronic formats. This policy should contain provisions for no-fee access to computer workstations with CD-ROMs, diskettes, and the Internet. The depository library should write the policy with the following factors in mind:

❖ All depository libraries must offer the general public free access to online Federal government information provided through the FDLP. Such access shall be provided to any library user free of fees or other restrictions such as age or residency

status. Users may be charged the "usual and customary" fees and subjected to "usual and customary" limits for printing, downloading, and storage media such as diskettes. Any fees or limits shall be consistent with other public service provisions of the library. Libraries that implement age restrictions should develop user behavior policies to address under age conduct problems rather than restrict access.

❖ All depositories are expected to offer public users access to one or more workstations with a graphical user interface, CD-ROM and DVD capability, Internet connections, and the ability to access government information via the World Wide Web.

❖ Free and unrestricted searching must be provided at one or more workstations. The number of available workstations is dependent upon the size of the depository operation and must be sufficient to serve the depository's users efficiently and effectively.

❖ Public access computer workstations may require patron authentication for security reasons; however, signage (on computers, posted at tables, on desks) must indicate that patrons may inquire at the public service desk for assistance. Libraries may provide guests the ability to login at a workstation or staff may login them in at authenticated stations. At a minimum, if all workstations providing internet access require authentication, patrons should be directed to public service desks for assistance through mediated searching.

❖ Time limits and the use of sign-up sheets are acceptable but should be no more severe than such measures used for nondepository workstation access.

❖ Filtering software may restrict access to official FDLP information, for example in the health or biological sciences fields. Therefore depository libraries must either allow users the option to use workstations without filtering software or have the capability of turning off the filter while searching FDLP information resources.

❖ Security measures must be consistent with FDLP guidelines and requirements.
  ➢ Log-in or sign-up sheets may be used; however, confidentiality of these records must be assured and consistent with applicable privacy statutes.
  ➢ Special passwords may be used.
  ➢ Use or access may be mediated or unmediated.
  ➢ E-mail capability of Web browser(s) on public workstations may be blocked; however, there should be capabilities provided for printing and downloading and/or transmission of electronic data, for example ftp, and for depository library public service areas to deliver government information to distance users (for example, by fax and e-mail), in accordance with existing policies in the library.
  ➢ Whenever possible, depository libraries are encouraged to provide disk space on publicly available computers for temporary storage of electronic government information for public use.

❖ Use of depository workstations is subject to the library's overall acceptable use policy.

❖ Users may be charged the "usual and customary" fees and subjected to "usual and customary" limits for printing, downloading, and storage media such as diskettes. Any fees or limits shall be consistent with other public service provisions of the library.

For additional information on providing access to online resources, see the following:

FDLP Internet Use Policy Guidelines
(http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/mgt/iupolicy.html)
Depository Library Public Service Guidelines for Government Information in Electronic Formats
(http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/mgt/pseguide.html)
Public Access to Electronic Government Information Provided through Federal Depository Libraries
(http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/computers/functional.html)
Managing the FDLP Electronic Collection: A Policy and Planning Document
(http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/ecplan.html)

If there is any question that access procedures or policies at a depository library could be seen as inhibiting free public access, the library should askGPO (http://gpo.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/gpo.cfg/php/enduser/ask.php).

Reference and Research Services to Users

Reference service offered to members of the general public using the depository collection must be comparable to reference service provided to the library's primary users. Ideally, reference services for users of the depository collection should be blended into reference services for the library collection as a whole. To learn about good practices in collection development, see Chapter 5 in this handbook. Comparable public service, in terms of hours of service, degree of assistance, and professional expertise of staff, should be extended to members of the general public using depository resources just as those services are made available to the library's primary users. The number of staff will depend on the size and scope of the library and depository collections, as well as the methods of organization of the depository collection. Depository staff may be in a separate Government Documents unit or part of other library units such as Technical Services or Reference Services. To learn more about staffing requirements, see Chapter 10 in this handbook.

With this general principle in mind, libraries have flexibility in determining specific policies or methods for providing reference and research services for government information. The 24/7 reference environment, reference services for electronic government information and needs of remote offsite users of government information pose particular challenges to be taken into account when developing service policies and providing reference services.

Reference service for government information in a library and for offsite users should be easily located. Users should also be able to easily locate, access, and use specific government information resources in the library's collection.

A professional librarian should be available to handle government information reference queries from users, with competent ready reference service available to all users. Such service includes the ability to assist users with locating specific documents or information in the depository and online by title and/or class number or other specific access points, as well as providing answers to quick or basic reference questions. Access to indexes and other reference tools should be available to all users in the library.

If a library provides reference services using methods other than in-person contact for their primary user groups (such as through phone, mail, fax, email or chat), these same or comparable methods of obtaining reference service should also be available to members of the public using the depository collection or government information. Policies governing specific aspects of reference service (such as limits on time expended on queries, types of queries accepted through various methods of contact, extent of materials copied or supplied to offsite users and identification requirements for service) are the prerogative of individual libraries, as long as such policies apply to all users of its collections. Such policies should provide for service levels to depository users that meet or exceed those for primary users.

The ability to provide more extensive research assistance is highly desirable. Research assistance includes identifying information, as opposed to specific publications, by subject or agency and help with complex electronic products, software, Web sites, and databases. Training for staff in depository libraries is available through FDLP Events (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/events/index.html), such as the Interagency Depository Seminar, Federal Depository Library Conference and Depository Library Council meetings, as well as through ALA GODORT (http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/GODORT/). More training may be available from library associations or consortia or government agencies such as the Census Bureau (http://www.census.gov/mso/www/training/index.htm). Research assistance from other depository librarians is also available from state-wide e-mail discussion groups or through national e-mail discussion groups such as GOVDOC-L (http://lists1.cac.psu.edu/archives/govdoc-l.html)or MAPS-L (http://www.listserv.uga.edu/archives/maps-l.html). Resources such as the GODORT Handout Exchange (http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/godort.html) and topical directories of government information such as the University of Colorado at Boulder Government Publications department's Subject Guides (http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/us/federal.htm), the University of Michigan Documents Center web site (http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/), GODORT's Frequently Used Sites Related to U.S. Federal Government Information (http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/romans/fdtf/)and Firstgov.gov (http://www.firstgov.gov/) offer reference tools and guides for more extensive research questions.

Extended assistance and training for all users in the location and use of government information in all formats, including major reference tools and resources such as catalogs and indexes, and key government information Web sites or electronic resources such as GPO Access (http://www.gpoaccess.gov/) or American FactFinder (http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en), is highly encouraged. These could be provided either in person, through printed handouts or help

documentation, interactive online tutorials or Web pages. Examples of handouts and instructional materials for specific tools or subjects can be found at the GODORT Handout Exchange (http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/godort/ref.htm).

All libraries should have a written policy regarding public services for government information in electronic formats that includes provisions for no-fee access to electronic government information in tangible format and on the Internet for all users. The policy should address the issues of free access, availability of computers, time limits for computer use and unfiltered access to the Internet for all users delineated in the FDLP Internet Use Policy Guidelines
(http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/mgt/iupolicy.html). Limits or costs for downloading and printing should be consistent with limits and costs for printing and downloading nondepository information. More detailed public service guidelines addressing hardware, software and network support, time frames for providing access to tangible electronic products, and reference service are available in Depository Library Public Service Guidelines For Government Information in Electronic Formats
(http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/mgt/pseguide.html). These guidelines were adopted in 1998 by the Depository Library Council and provide performance goals for depository libraries in providing access to government information in electronic formats. For a tiered outline of skills useful for providing services for electronic government information and links to resources to acquire proficiency in each area, see GODORT's E-competencies
(http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/GODORT/gitco/ecomps.html) document.

A library can facilitate access to tangible government publications it does not own by locating libraries that own the publication and providing full bibliographic information to the user. Libraries have the flexibility to determine appropriate follow-through, such as requesting a photocopy on the user's behalf, directing users to a nearby library with the item, initiating an interlibrary loan, or directing users to their local library for interlibrary loan.

It is not always possible for an individual library to fully answer every reference query, to provide in depth assistance for every electronic product or to support every format of government information available, such as 5.25-inch floppy discs. Information about additional local and national resources for further research should be offered to users in such circumstances. See the Referrals section for further details.

Referrals

The Federal Depository Library Program is a cooperative program that enables libraries and librarians to share access to collections and expertise. Libraries should be aware of resources available at neighboring depositories and at the regional depository. Libraries should not only refer their users to other libraries for access to unique collections and expertise but should also offer their own unique expertise, collections, and resources to users referred by other depositories or organizations.

First, librarians should be familiar with resources and expertise within their own institution that can be used to supplement service to users. The systems or information technology (IT) staff within the library or larger parent organization may offer support to the depository staff or the use of specialized equipment to enhance depository services.

Librarians should also be familiar with the collections of their regional library and neighboring depositories. The National Bibliography (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/cip/index.html), Federal Depository Library Directory (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/tools/ldirect.html) and Documents Data Miner (http://govdoc.wichita.edu/ddm2/gdocframes.asp) can assist in locating appropriate libraries and collections. Awareness of equipment or technical expertise available at local depositories can facilitate access to less common tangible electronic formats or assistance with more specialized software and information resources.

Finally, librarians should also have knowledge of available reference expertise in specific topical areas for referral of complex reference and research questions. Resources to help identify such expertise include e-mail discussion groups such as GOVDOC-L (http://lists1.cac.psu.edu/archives/govdoc-l.html), MAPS-L (http://www.listserv.uga.edu/archives/maps-l.html) and regional depositories.

Circulation of Materials & Interlibrary Loan

Libraries have the option of establishing their own circulation policies for use of depository materials outside the library. However, the principle of comparable treatment of depository and nondepository collections should be used in determining circulation policy for depository materials. For example, if a library's nondepository reference or microformat collections are noncirculating, select depository materials designated as reference tools or depository materials in microformat could also be noncirculating. Circulation of materials that cannot be easily used in the library is recommended. Examples include tangible electronic products for which a library cannot provide adequate hardware, software or user support.

Circulation periods, fines for lost or overdue materials, circulation to nonprimary clientele and other circulation policies are a local decision. However, policies should follow the general principle of comparable treatment.

Interlibrary loan policies are a local decision. However, depository libraries are encouraged to provide depository materials on interlibrary loan except for heavily used information products. All depository libraries should have a policy of providing photocopies of depository materials in traditional formats to other libraries consistent with that for nondepository materials.

Marketing to Users

Public service begins with public awareness. Every effort should be made to ensure that the depository collection is used and that publications are not merely stored in inaccessible locations. Depository promotion should extend to all potential user groups including library staff, the library's primary users (academic community, judges, etc.), and residents of the U.S. Congressional district or relevant region. Depository outreach in the surrounding communities should be ongoing, increasing the visibility of the depository, its resources, and its services.

Depository libraries must post signage or the depository emblem in a prominent location, preferably visible from the exterior of the library, indicating the library is a Federal depository and government information resources are available for use by the general public without charge. Free decals and other promotional materials are available from GPO and can be ordered online (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pr/order.html).

Public Awareness
Public access to government information begins with public awareness of its existence. In order to benefit from the resources of Federal depository libraries, the American public needs to be alerted to these valuable informational resources provided at taxpayers' expense.

While the utility of Government information is well documented, the informational resources of many Federal depositories remain underutilized. Usage of depository materials varies widely from library to library, depending on the visibility and accessibility of the documents collection in the libraries. Because underutilized depository collections are not cost-effective, it is in the best interest of the library to engage in depository promotion. Increasing public awareness, and therefore usage, of the depository will provide additional justification for increasing the funding, resources, and support provided by the library administration.

Bibliographic Control
The single most important action depositories can take to increase public awareness and usage of depository resources is providing subject access to those resources through the library's main catalog. For more information, see chapter 6 on Bibliographic Control.

Web Pages
Library Web pages are a popular 21st century vehicle for publicizing depository collections and services.

Depository libraries are encouraged to develop homepages or bookmarks for government information and to work cooperatively with other depository libraries in

their area to provide links to prominent or useful sites for the general public. Links to current news topics can incorporate both documents and nondocuments. Examples might include controversial Supreme Court decisions, elections, pending legislation, and natural disasters. Academic librarians often use subject-oriented Web pages for classroom instruction. For assistance in developing a Web page, refer to the GODORT template (http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/GODORT/gitco/govinfotemplate.html) and FDLP graphics (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pr/graphics.html).

Library web pages are an excellent way to publicize depository collections and services. Information posted on Web pages must not conflict with the provisions of Title 44, United States Code, Chapter 19 (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/title44/chap19.html) or other written policies of the depository library program that ensure public access to FDLP resources.

GPO Marketing Program

GPO provides depositories with free promotional materials including folders, bookmarks, pamphlets, posters, decals, and classification charts. You can order these materials through the Free Depository Library Promotional Materials Order Form (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pr/order.html). You can create packets to distribute at library programs, or simply put them out for users to take as needed.

Many agencies will also provide the library with free publications to distribute to the general public. One of the best sites for receiving bulk orders of consumer information pamphlets is the Federal Trade Commission (http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/pubs/bulkordr.htm). An excellent comprehensive resource for consumer publications is the Consumer Information Catalog which can be obtained through the Federal Citizen's Information Center (http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/) or viewed online (http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/catalog.pdf).

Internal Promotion

All levels of the library staff, from director to clerical worker, should be aware of the unique resources of the documents collection.

An effective method of increasing staff awareness of depository resources in all formats is important. Public service staff throughout the library needs to be familiar with the documents collection and how to access online publications. Crosstraining of library staff develops this librarywide expertise and awareness. Because depository reference service is often integrated with reference services for the institution, all reference staff have a role in providing assistance to depository users.

Crosstraining on depository operations should not be limited to the public service staff. Many technical service librarians would benefit from instruction on the many unique aspects of depository operations. A depository can be thought of as a library

within a library; depository operations mirror all the functions of a library and should not be thought of in isolation. Depositories function best as an integral part of the larger library.

While specific times for crosstraining staff should be developed, many activities can be conducted on an ongoing basis. For instance, the documents librarian should always be on the alert for government publications that other staffers would find useful for reference or personal interest.

Other effective ways to promote documents internally include circulating e-mails pertaining to current news events that are document related, routing interesting titles and shipping lists, conducting individual tours of the documents department for new staff members, creating mini training sessions before the library opens, and sponsoring formal training sessions to educate staff about answering difficult customer questions.

In a successful depository, services to depository users are fully integrated into overall services to users, and all library personnel know and can enthusiastically recommend documents to users.

External Promotion
Depository libraries should also develop strategies for promoting the depository operation to the library's primary users and the general public. Displays, bibliographies, brochures, flyers, Web pages, current awareness announcements, and other traditional library promotional tools can be employed.

Create a display of colorful, controversial, unusual or provocative documents. Such a display can dispel the myth that documents are all "dry, boring and legalistic." For examples of displays created by other depositories, see the Government Documents Display Clearinghouse
(http://www.lib.mnsu.edu/lib/govdoc/proj/tutorials/finalfront2.html). Generally, the more creative and library-specific a promotion is, the more effective you will be in attracting people to the depository.

Academic or special libraries can contact department or division heads and student organizations or clients to inform them of the unique services and benefits that the depository offers to their particular user group. A review of future class offerings is one way to get started. The depository coordinator might assist a faculty member in structuring a library assignment, creating or contributing to a class Web page, participating in class conferencing, or teaming up with a subject specialist to present an instructional session.

A public library will probably have a community resource file which could be used as a starting point to identify potential user groups. A letter explaining the depository program and some of the subject areas in your collection, relevant to the group being contacted, is a good first step. Then follow up with an offer to speak to the group or help with research or special projects. Because the memberships of such community

organizations change, this project could be repeated every 2 to 3 years. An example is to speak to nonprofit groups about the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (http://12.46.245.173/cfda/cfda.html), Grants.gov (http://www.grants.gov/), and using American FactFinder (http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en) to retrieve statistics for grant proposals.

Of course, external promotion includes contact with individuals either in casual conversation or through formal notification of recent acquisitions or holdings in their area of interest.

Outreach

Promotional activities can no longer be confined to the library walls. Librarians are finding it necessary to reach out to users and nonusers by leaving the library and going to where they are. Getting outside the library is the best way to attract nonusers. Finding opportunities to exhibit or present subject-specific workshops at local conventions or conferences can be a good opportunity to reach out to nonusers. Many school districts offer educational opportunities for their teachers. Some have days dedicated to training. Contact local school districts to become a part of these activities. Promote the free resources of the Federal government available for teachers and students. Some of these resources include lesson plans and teacher kits. Some useful sites to use would be Federal Resources for Educational Excellence(http://www.ed.gov/free/index.html), American Memory Learning Page(http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/index.html), Ben's Guide (http://bensguide.gpo.gov/), and the Gateway to Educational Materials(http://www.thegateway.org/).

Another form of outreach is through local media outlets. The library's depository status, resources, and services could be highlighted on the local cable television's scrolled community announcements. Contact the local radio and television stations. They all run public service announcements and are often interested in generating programming that would be educational or service oriented. FDLP Public Service Announcement and Articles (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pr/psa-text.html). Contact local newspapers to invite a reporter to visit the depository collection.

✦ Practical Promotion Suggestions

❖ Provide top-notch public service that goes beyond users' expectations, and word-of-mouth will ensure a certain amount of public awareness.

❖ Make sure the unique resources and services of the depository are mentioned in any literature about the library, library Web pages, and any librarywide tours or orientations.

❖ Celebrate significant depository milestones (the 500,000th document, a special anniversary, a new service) and invite members of Congress, library administrators

in the area, and the local media. GPO offers free materials for [depository anniversary promotions](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pr/order.html) (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pr/order.html).

❖ Never miss an opportunity to visit another depository library. A neighboring depository operation may have some good promotional ideas. Also, think about adapting a promotional activity that has been used successfully in promoting other types of information or service in your own library.

❖ Share information on successful public awareness activities by submitting articles to the "Readers Exchange" column of [Administrative Notes](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/adnotes/index.html) (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/adnotes/index.html), [DttP: Documents to the People](http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/GODORT/DTTP/)(http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/GODORT/DTTP/) or other publications related to literature and government resources. Share such information at workshops and documents related meetings.

❖ Develop special alcoves in the documents area for heavily requested depository material. A "statistics center" with census materials or a depository CD-ROM center might be worth establishing.

❖ Invite groups from the community, such as school groups, social or fraternal organizations, or other interested parties, to tour the documents area.

❖ Contact all public and academic libraries in your area and make sure they know to refer patrons to the depository. Consider selective housing and other strategies of networking with neighboring libraries or other locations within your institution.

❖ Develop a subject-oriented Web page that includes government documents and register it with Yahoo, Google, or related search engines. Publicize locally any Web awards you receive.

❖ Expand information and training for other librarians, faculty, students, local government, etc., by reaching them where they are. Attend their meetings and conferences, offer to present a specialized program for them, prepare a poster session for display at meetings.

❖ Collaborate with your users to integrate government information into their own work and research:
  ➢ In academic libraries, work with other librarians and faculty to integrate government information into the curricula.
  ➢ In public libraries, meet with government officials, schools, and local organizations to help them with specific information sources such as census data.
  ➢ In specialized libraries, work with primary users to deliver information efficiently for their special needs.

For more ideas, see [Promoting Depository Collections and Services](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pr/index.html) (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pr/index.html).

Federal Depository Library of the Year Award

The [Federal Depository Library of the Year Award](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/fdlofyear/index.html) (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/fdlofyear/index.html) was established in 2003. It provides special recognition for a library that furthers the goal of the Federal Depository Library Program by ensuring that the American public has free access to its Government's information through all of the following areas:

❖ Outstanding service to meet the Federal government information needs in the library's service area;
❖ Creativity and innovation in developing specific community programs for use of Federal government information or a dramatic increase in their community's usage of Federal government information; and
❖ Leadership in creating public service programs that can be emulated by other Federal Depository Libraries.

The Federal Depository Library of the Year demonstrates the following attributes:

❖ A documented knowledge of the Federal government information needs in the library's service area;
❖ Knowledgeable depository staff to assist users in the identification and use of the Federal government information that best meets their needs;
❖ Excellent bibliographic control practices that enhance public access;
❖ Outstanding public services including significant promotion of the collection and services in the library and in the community;
❖ Substantial cooperative efforts with other depository and nondepository libraries to share knowledge and resources with a larger community;
❖ Access to a well-defined collection of Federal depository tangible and electronic resources adequate to meet the needs of the library's service area; and
❖ Exceptional care and preservation of the depository collection.

Nominations are announced on GPO-FDLP-L (http://listserv.access.gpo.gov/) list usually in the spring. A selection committee that includes the Superintendent of Documents evaluates, rates, and ranks the nominations. The winning library is notified in a timely manner to allow travel plans to be made for the depository coordinator and library director to attend the fall Depository Library Conference and Council Meeting. Past winners, libraries of current Depository Library Council members, and libraries on probation are ineligible for consideration.

The library director and the depository coordinator from the winning library are brought to Washington to accept the award honoring their library as the Federal Depository Library of the Year. The presentation is made at the fall Depository Library Conference, the largest gathering of government documents librarians in the country. This is a good opportunity for the depository coordinator and director from the winning library to showcase their library's best practices and outstanding public service. The award can be a great marketing tool for the winning library.

✦ Tips, Practical Advice, and Lessons Learned

❖ Examples of handouts, instructional and promotional materials, and tutorials for specific tools or subjects for users and library staff, as well as policies on access, Internet use, and public services for government information in electronic formats can

be found at the GODORT Handout Exchange
(http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/godort/ref.htm).

❖ GODORT's E-competencies (http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/GODORT/gitco/ecomps.html)
document provides a tiered outline of skills useful for providing services for electronic
government information and links to resources to acquire proficiency in each area.

❖ Create Web guides or training documentation for staff as well as library users. As
libraries consolidate service points and departments, more staff members who are
not government information specialists are providing reference services for users
seeking government information creating an opportunity to promote greater
knowledge of government information resources and service policies for
government information to a larger group of library staff. Continuous crosstraining
of all reference staff is critical. While a strong culture of referral and consultation
with government information specialists should be encouraged, users are more
efficiently and effectively served when all reference personnel can provide some
level of government information reference.

❖ All library staff that provides services directly to the public should be aware of
access and service requirements and policies for federal government information,
as users looking for government information may approach any service point or
person initially. Maintain clear, updated, and easily accessible summaries of
policies and procedures relating to access and service for depository resources and
provide to all staff.

❖ Maintain awareness of cataloging and technical service processes and policies as
they frequently have a large impact on public services. For example, the way the
library catalog displays information can have a strong influence on users' ability to
easily locate government information. Shared library catalogs facilitate increased
awareness of resources at other depositories, resource sharing, and more informed
referrals.

❖ Visit nearby depository libraries and your regional depository library to get a
better knowledge of their collections, available reference tools and resources, and
areas of expertise. These visits will help develop increased awareness of other
resources that might be available to your users.

❖ Monitor and participate in local, regional or national government information
groups either in person or electronically through their e-mail discussion groups.
Lists such as GOVDOC-L (http://lists1.cac.psu.edu/archives/govdoc-l.html), Maps-
L (http://www.listserv.uga.edu/archives/maps-l.html), and DocTech-L
(http://list.lib.usu.edu/mailman/listinfo/doctech-l) provide invaluable access to
other government information specialists' expertise. Most states also have an
active GODORT organization. Subscribe to the GPO-FDLP-L
(http://listserv.access.gpo.gov/scripts/wa.exe?SUBED1=gpo-fdlp-l&A=1) discussion
list and RSS feed (http://www.gpoaccess.gov/rss/index.html) from the FDLP

Desktop News and Updates to keep current on news and issues in the FDLP program.

❖ Cultivate good relationships with library technical and systems staff, and provide input into technology-related policies affecting user access to government information. The policies, procedures, and personnel of the wider library and library information technology environment often have a large impact on public services for electronic government information.

❖ Create or participate in library or regional public service standards, and establish regular and quantifiable measurements of service to help assess and improve public services in your library.   Examples of service standards and public service measures include the Metrodocs Libraries Service Standards (http://www.odl.state.ok.us/usinfo/metrodocs.htm) and the Association of Research Libraries' LIBQUAL+ (http://www.libqual.org/) program.

❖ Get ideas for displays to promote depository collections at the Government Documents Display Clearinghouse (http://www.lib.mnsu.edu/lib/govdoc/proj/tutorials/finalfront2.html).

❖ Ensure your library Web pages are handicapped-accessible. The W3C Markup Validation Service (http://validator.w3.org/) can check the coding of a Web page formatted with HTML or XHTML for errors, and the WatchFire® WebXACT (http://webxact.watchfire.com/) verification service is a free site that will check Web pages for accessibility issues.

❖ If your library policy is to have filters on all public computers, talk to your administrator about the need to be able to override the filter for free and unfettered access to government information resources. The library staff should be able to override or turn off the filter for depository users. Use or access may unmediated or mediated.

❖ Public access computer workstations may require patron authentication for security reasons; however, signage (on computers, posted at tables, on desks) must indicate that patrons may inquire at the public service desk for assistance. Libraries may provide guests the ability to login at a workstation or staff may login them in at authenticated stations. At a minimum, if all workstations providing internet access require authentication, patrons should be directed to public service desks for assistance through mediated searching.

❖ Libraries should address the provision of depository information to minors that might otherwise be subject to restricted access. Internet safety policies must insure depository resources are not denied to users because of their age.

Did you realize that you don't have to .....?

❖ Provide free printing or photocopying?
A library may charge the same fees for printing and photocopying depository information resources that it charges for nondepository materials to be copied or printed. Downloading, however, must be available without fees. A library is not required to provide storage media, such as floppies or USB drives, unless they are provided for users of nondepository materials. In that case, the same charges may be applied.

❖ Circulate depository materials?
A library has the option of establishing its own circulation policies for use of depository materials outside the library.

❖ Maintain identical public service hours at the general reference and documents service desks?
The general public must be able to access the depository's collections and services outside standard business hours if the library's primary clientele is able to do so. Comparable service to both depository and nondepository materials can be provided through integration of depository services into the overall reference policy to ensure assistance is available at all times.

Important for Library Administrators

❖ The Federal Depository Library Program was established to provide the residents of the United States with access to government information. Public access to this information remains the highest priority of all Federal depository libraries.
❖ Depository libraries have a fundamental obligation to provide free public access to depository information resources and to minimize other barriers to public access to the library's depository facilities, collections, and services.
❖ In general, access and services for depository information resources should equal or exceed those applicable to other library collections and services.
❖ All depository libraries must offer the general public free access to online Federal government information provided through the FDLP. Such access shall be provided to any library user free of fees or other restrictions such as age or residency status.
❖ Filtering software may restrict access to official FDLP information, for example in the health or biological sciences fields. Therefore depository libraries must allow users the option to use workstations without filtering software or have the capability of turning off the filter while searching FDLP information resources.
❖ If a library provides reference services using methods other than in-person contact for their primary user groups (such as through phone, mail, fax, email or chat), these same or comparable methods of obtaining reference service should also be available to members of the public using the depository collection and government information.
❖ All libraries should have a written policy regarding public services for government information in electronic formats that includes provisions for no-fee access to electronic government information in tangible format and on the Internet for all

users. Signage throughout the library and other library policies must be in accordance with these policies.

❖ Each depository library has the option of establishing its own circulation policies for use of depository materials outside the library. However, the principle of comparable treatment of depository and nondepository collections should be used in determining circulation policy for depository materials.

❖ Depository libraries shall post signage or the depository emblem in a prominent location, preferably visible from the exterior of the library, indicating the library is a Federal depository and Government information resources are available for use by the general public without charge.